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“THE PROBLEM OF THE OLD TESTAMENT¹.”

THE book which bears the above title is an elaborate study of recent criticism of the Old Testament by one who possesses a wide acquaintance with the literature and feels himself bound to issue a solemn warning against its tendencies. *Nubecula est quae cito evanesceat*—such is its motto, and it invites the attention of those who have declared their adherence to methods of research which are admittedly modern, and have accepted conclusions which, in the author's opinion, are precarious, unsound, and doomed to perish. Whilst a book of this kind will not unnaturally be welcomed by those who are opposed to biblical study, it would be a great mistake to class it with productions whose tone or character render them almost beneath notice. Dr. Orr, the author, tells us that he has had the present work in view for many years. As one engaged in the teaching of theology his interest had been continually aroused in the labours of the growing number of biblical critics; no longer a matter of choice, it was necessity which forced him to pay regard to their opinions. “The time is past when the discussion of Old Testament questions can be left wholly to professional experts, who represent one, but only one, of the many points of view necessary to be taken into account in considering this subject” (p. xiv). With these words Dr. Orr justifies (if that were needed) his entrance into the field, and it is useful to quote his words, because “professional experts” already, in fact, represent the most diverse points of view. and because it is well to remark that whilst Dr. Orr's own position is essentially the theological, the O. T. is studied at the present day for other than devout purposes. In other words, the O. T. is a storehouse of material which attracts students of the Ancient East, and some are more concerned with the work of criticism in its inquiry after the truth than in the bearing of each advance upon the traditional faith. Moreover, when Dr. Orr speaks of “professional experts,” the epithet implies a preparation and equipment which those who openly profess their opposition should surely not be without.

Now, additional interest is attached to Dr. Orr's book from the circumstance that it has been crowned by the Bross prize of 6,000 dollars. This handsome award is made by the Trustees of Lake Forest University for the best work which fulfils the conditions laid

¹ *The Problem of the Old Testament considered with reference to recent criticism.*
By James Orr, D.D., Professor of Apologetics and Systematic Theology.
United Free Church College, Glasgow. (Nisbet & Co.)

down by the generous donor. From the deed of gift it appears that the founder desired "to call out the best efforts of the highest talent and the ripest scholarship of the world, to illustrate from science or any department of knowledge . . . to demonstrate the divine origin and authority of the Christian Scriptures . . . and show how both Science and Revelation coincide. . . ." In a word, the prize is offered for the best apologetic work, and Dr. Orr's publication (only sent to the arbiters in proof as an afterthought) will doubtless be held to have deserved its reward. For this and other reasons it will readily be understood that it has produced considerable impression upon its numerous readers. It is written with earnestness, quiet conviction, and an absence of direct diatribe which carries weight—if the truth be told, the book throughout is distinctly unfair, but this is a fault which one is willing to excuse when it is found that the writer has not adopted the tone and language which is sometimes common. Nevertheless, in the future, when the aims of biblical criticism are less misunderstood, even Dr. Orr will be considered sufficiently perverse¹. For the present, it is enough that Dr. Orr writes seriously, with the intense conviction that the critics are mistaken; and a serious work is to be taken seriously. We have now a book which will rank as the standard authority of those who are opposed to modern criticism, one, indeed, which, more than any other work of similar tendency, will be held to represent the general position of the conservative side. Such a book is not without its use for future expositions of O.T. criticism.

It would be impossible to deal fully or even adequately with a work of over five hundred pages within the limits of a review. Moreover, the task is unnecessary. The fundamental weakness of Dr. Orr's personal opinions has been so clearly demonstrated by others² that it is waste of space to restate the critical position. It would be useless in these pages to spend any time upon the emphasis with which Dr. Orr reproduces arguments which are antiquated or beside the mark. For example, the familiar *argumentum ad terrorem* appears much too often, and when Dr. Orr is persuaded that modern criticism,

¹ After reading Dr. Orr's book one was at once reminded of Pusey's misapprehension of the critics of Daniel: "disbelief had been the parent not the offspring of their criticism; their starting-point, not the winning-post, of their course" (quoted in Estlin Carpenter's *The Bible in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 173). But such an attitude is common among those unfamiliar with the character or necessity of critical literary or historical investigation.

² E.g. by Prof. Addis in the *Review of Theology and Philosophy*, Sept. 1906; and by Prof. Peake in the *Contemporary Review*, April, 1907.

"must, if carried out to its logical issues . . . prove subversive of our Christian faith . . ." (p. xv), it is surely unnecessary for any one to refer to the numerous writers who have come to an opposite conclusion. Dr. Orr's objection is similar to that which successive pioneers of science (or of any study in which biblical evidence was at stake) have had to face, and the experience of history in the past goes to show that it was the dogma and not the assured results of research which man has been compelled to adjust. The results which some fear at the present day from the work of biblical criticism are analogous to those dreaded in past centuries, and it is impossible at this age to condemn a study because of the "logical issues" that are alleged.

Moreover, it is only necessary for Dr. Orr to *prove* that modern research "rests on erroneous fundamental principles" (p. xv) and he will attain his goal. This research is an attempt to handle problems on methodical lines—if once Dr. Orr, or any one else, will demonstrate that the methods are unsound, there is no necessity to bring in arguments which only confuse the issue. Now, it is extremely suggestive that the author candidly admits that the course of biblical criticism "with all its attendant evils . . . has been productive, under the providence of God, of many benefits which in large measure counterbalance if they do not outweigh these evils" (p. 9). I should have liked to quote the whole page in which Dr. Orr discharges his debt to criticism, since I must confess that it has puzzled me more than any other in the whole of his book. Here the author admits the great fundamental principle of criticism—its legitimacy. Every one who studies the O.T. in the light of modern knowledge is, he says, to some extent a "higher critic." The careful scrutiny of the actual phenomena of the Bible "on the principles which it is customary to apply to all literature" is freely granted. "There is nothing in such scholarly examination of the Bible, even though the result be to present some things in a new light, which need alarm any one." It is not too much to say that any one who carefully weighs Dr. Orr's words will agree that he ought never to have written them—they ruin the object of his book. Elsewhere, too, writing on supernatural prediction as an element in prophecy, Dr. Orr admits the good that criticism has done in the vivification of the study of the prophets and in promoting a better understanding of their meaning (p. 452 sq.). Again, any one can see that it is not permissible for the author to make such concessions. The methods which have led to the results of which he approves are precisely those which have led to less acceptable conclusions, and it is often nothing more than arbitrariness which causes him to draw a dividing

line here and there between what is sound and unsound. It is not justifiable for a writer to approve of the tendencies of critical study only in so far as they agree with his own subjective standpoint; but one must confess that this appears to be Dr. Orr's attitude.

Is it the spirit of contrariness which leads him to replace the theory that similarity of incidents arises from diversity of authorship by the view that the same author incorporates varying narratives in his history (p. 237)? Other cases could be cited to illustrate the perverseness with which critical hypotheses are disposed of in favour of views which are apparently thought to be more in accordance with the tradition. The same spirit is evident when he admits that the patriarchal stories are "not contemporary narration, but history in the form of *carefully preserved tradition*" (p. 87) . . . "tradition having the rounded dramatic character which narratives naturally assume as the result of repeated telling, and recorded in the form in which they finally reached the literary narrator" (p. 88). It is even granted that "a measure of 'idealization' and reflection of later ideas and conditions" may not be excluded both in the patriarchal narratives and also in the book of Joshua where allowance is to be made "for the generalizing tendency peculiar to all summaries" (p. 240). This is slipshod criticism, but it is criticism of sorts, and the careful reader who observes Dr. Orr's concessions and compares them with former traditional standpoints will realize the advance which criticism has forced, and may even be excused if he asks himself why the author should have found so much to say against the opinions of critics.

But a great deal of space is devoted to the examination of the differences between individual critics or schools of criticism, and one can easily imagine with what amusement Dr. Orr's carefully compiled conspectus of divergences could be greeted. It would be incorrect to say that he shows himself better acquainted with critical literature than with criticism itself because he knows criticism is necessary and employs it. But when one perceives that he is ready both to blame the so-called "certainties" of recent criticism and to scoff at its "uncertainties," one must confess that much of the book is unintelligible. Critics of the most diverse standpoints are played one against the other; where they agree, their "fundamental principles" are wrong; where they disagree, it is because of their preconceived ideas that difficulties exist; and yet—and yet in spite of this, Dr. Orr appears to believe sincerely that the benefits of criticism "counter-balance if they do not outweigh" its evils.

"The Problem of the Old Testament," as Dr. Orr conceives it, is the reconciliation of its problems with tradition, and the key is virtually the obscuring of the phenomena with which scholars have

been grappling. It is with pleasure, therefore, that one notes his concluding sentence wherein he begs those who have yielded too ready or indiscriminating an assent to the positions of the modern critical movement to examine more carefully their foundations. It is a request with which every critic will cordially agree *provided only* that the reader at the same time impartially and patiently examines his O. T. for himself. Let any one consider how biblical criticism has grown up from the laborious investigation of details with which not one, perhaps, in a hundred troubles himself; let him reflect how these investigations have had to stand the severest scrutiny from scholars who have worked through the same evidence; how scholars have arrived independently at essentially similar results starting from the principles which Dr. Orr freely admits; let him finally remember how sincere and devout workers representing all points of view have felt compelled to accept the new movements of biblical study. To those who know intimately the critical work of the last thirty or forty years and the character of the controversial literature, Dr. Orr's book will perhaps appear antiquarian—successive scholars in the past have replied to objections and criticisms precisely identical to those here brought forward, and one is bound to state that it would have been a more serviceable achievement had the author devoted more attention to the refutation of the replies in the past than to the study of handbooks and textbooks of critical study.

One asks oneself: Will it always be necessary to demonstrate the initial steps of biblical criticism? The answer depends entirely upon those who guide popular opinion and upon their attitude to its progress. Already Dr. Orr's book marks an advance upon former traditional views, but it indicates a stage which is intellectually unsatisfying. What methodical student, who knows the principles of literary and historical criticism elsewhere, could rest content with the vague conclusions reached by Dr. Orr or by any other writer opposed to modern criticism. Immediately one allows the necessity and the legitimacy of biblical criticism one must choose between haphazard study and one that strives to be methodical; between a nebulous idea that the old traditional standpoint is faulty and the honest attempt to recover the truth; between the recognition of difficulties and the unprejudiced attempt to unravel them; between a vague and uncertain attitude (which it is impossible to define) and the "moderate" critical views which have won or forced the approval of scholars of all creeds and classes. It is not enough for opponents to attack the intricacies of Pentateuchal or Hexateuchal criticism. It is futile to attempt the criticism of Deuteronomy

without considering the Deuteronomic style and phraseology in the historical books. It is equally insufficient to propose to overthrow the hypotheses encircling "P" without taking into account the progress of ideas between Kings and Chronicles. No less misguided is the attack upon critical theories of the Law which does not consider the Prophets. In the present book, for example, Wellhausen is perhaps cited more often than any other critic and Wellhausen has told us of the one great stumbling-block in the tradition. He had read himself well into the historical and prophetic books of the O. T. and found, as his knowledge of the Law increased, that it was the Law which marred his enjoyment of them. "Dimly," he says, "I began to perceive that throughout there was between them all the difference that separates two wholly distinct worlds." And this is the experience of the ordinary biblical critic, and the one with which the opponents to biblical criticism do not seriously grapple. Consequently whilst biblical scholars are testing past steps and making fresh advances, ephemeral opponents are still struggling with the most elementary stages of criticism.

When all has been said, however, the fact remains that Dr. Orr has laid his finger upon some real weak points in modern critical theories. He has not succeeded in showing that the literary phenomena which call for explanation exist only in the imagination of the critic, and where he himself exercises criticism, he is hopelessly inadequate and intellectually unsatisfying. But he has often made keen remarks upon the views which have come to prevail among the critics, and cases could be cited where, in the opinion of the present writer, one is obliged either to accept an impossible position, that of the tradition, or to make a further advance. In this Dr. Orr finds himself in agreement with what has been observed by others elsewhere; there are weak points in the present historical reconstructions which necessitate either a more stringent and comprehensive criticism or—a return to positions known to be untenable. The work of criticism has been analytical; it is followed by synthetic and constructive representations in which the thread of the tradition has been followed as closely as possible. If some of Dr. Orr's remarks are sound it will be necessary to undertake a revision—not of the elementary analytical steps, but of the general historical outline which has been reconstructed. But Dr. Orr is not the only one to perceive the existing anomalies, and the recent writings of Winckler, A. Jeremias, and Baentsch may suggest that biblical criticism after reaching a certain stage has been temporarily diverted from the right path. Dr. Orr himself has drawn attention to the present situation, regarding it as evidence of the insecurity of the critical

position, and he has emphasized statements which two of the above scholars have felt bound to utter, as though any weakness in the explanatory theories involved the failure of the preliminary steps¹. A situation has arisen which might easily lead to increased misunderstanding, and there is a possibility that the more vital differences among those engaged upon O. T. research could provoke quite incorrect inferences regarding past progress.

In order to apprehend the work of biblical research it will be convenient to notice very briefly three of its aspects. In the first place, a great deal of attention has been devoted to the O. T. from the point of view of comparative custom and religion, and it has been proved conclusively that the Israelites shared much the same thought and usage as their neighbours. It is the essentially national character of their writings which makes them depict as specifically Israelite that which has analogies or parallels elsewhere, and the feature is now generally recognized. One understands and appreciates the Israelite standpoint, but viewed critically it is subjective. There is, in fact, a certain similarity in Eastern life and thought which allows one to appraise more securely the distinctive features in the O. T.², and for the historian the Israelites are one of a number of related peoples in a land in which the same essential underlying conditions both precede and follow the period covered by O. T. history.

Next, the enormous progress of Assyriological and Egyptological studies has vividly illuminated the position which Israel held in the Ancient East. The history of Israel is the history of only one of the small states lying between the great powers; each ran its own course, and in estimating the career of Israel it is requisite to view events not only from within—from the biblical standpoint—but from without. The records of the Israelites give only their point of view, and for the study of the history it is necessary both to go behind them and to supplement them. It is the merit of Winckler to have lifted O. T. history out of the somewhat narrow lines upon which it had previously been studied and to emphasize the necessity of a more comprehensive attitude towards the subject. Both Winckler and A. Jeremias have drawn striking pictures of the ancient world, and of that culture which apparently spread over Palestine and Syria, and in spite of faults and exaggeration in their exposition it is

¹ See the *Expository Times*, Dec. 1906, p. 120; *Princeton Theological Review*, April, 1907, p. 182 sq.

² Cp. Orr, p. 10.

impossible not to realize that they force a reconsideration of biblical history from another standpoint¹.

But, finally, all are agreed as to the necessity of *some* criticism when the literary phenomena of the O. T. are concerned, and the past labours of literary criticism prove that *some* hypothesis is necessary to account for their origin. Since the phenomena are so complicated no simple hypothesis will suffice, and no one has as yet succeeded in overthrowing the theory that now holds the field or in presenting a satisfactory alternative². The Graf-Wellhausen hypothesis can be stated in various ways, but put in the briefest terms as the starting-point for the work of synthesis and reconstruction, it is the conclusion that the account of the history of Israel (Genesis—Kings) is, in the main, due to two recensions of earlier material—the one on the lines of Deuteronomy, the other, later, on the lines of post-exilic priestly teaching. Obviously there are numerous questions relating to the dates, limits and character (*a*) of both recensions, (*b*) of the earlier sources incorporated by them, and (*c*) of other sources (early or late) of independent origin, but the above in several respects appears to the present writer the most convenient method of stating the general conclusion.

It is under these three aspects that the problems of the O. T. are to be handled and the failure to pay sufficient regard to the various points of view seems to be one of the common causes of misunderstanding. Whatever our knowledge of the Ancient East might lead us to expect, whatever traditions were current, it is clear that for biblical study the criticism of the records which actually survive is indispensable. What confusion can arise from the adoption of too narrow a standpoint is apparent in discussions of the patriarchal narratives. Dr. Orr picks holes in the critical views which have been held regarding the dates assigned to them (pp. 67 sqq.), and he quotes with approval a portion of Gunkel's conclusion to the effect that the details go back as far as 1200 B. C. A. Jeremias, moreover, urges that the narratives must belong to the period to which the tradition attributes them on the strength of their evidence for

¹ Again cp. Orr, p. 396, bearing in mind, however, that his remarks upon the "attitude and tactics of rationalistic critics" are distinctly biased and one-sided.

² These words are written deliberately, with full cognizance of the works of Klostermann and others, including even recent attempts by Mr. Wiener or by the Rev. A. C. Robinson to prove the inadequacy of the Graf-Wellhausen hypothesis by the alleged refutation of details. It must not be ignored that the literary phenomena demand an explanation which mere random criticism does not furnish.

culture, thought, &c. Here we are certainly on insecure ground, because Jeremias himself has taken pains to show that the related elements of culture are found throughout the O. T., in the N. T., and in post-biblical literature¹. His material would only prove that the narratives are in accordance with old Oriental conditions, and less ambiguous criteria are required for determining their date. The prevalence of similar underlying conditions throughout the ages naturally explains why some of the post-exilic laws contain elements of great antiquity—the written source gives the details in the form which they had taken in the writer's time, and the attempt to ascertain the precise age of any source cannot start from the criticism of elements which do not admit of being dated. So far as the patriarchal narratives are concerned, the certain *literary* conclusion is that we owe them in their present form to the priestly recension; the dates of the earlier narratives incorporated therein are questions upon which the last word has not been said, and it is the first duty of historical criticism to inquire how far their contents can be used for the history of the period to which they are relegated. Dr. Orr's conclusion that they are for the most part "carefully preserved tradition" is not proved by his own arguments, and simply begs the whole question.

The problems of the O. T. turn essentially upon historical investigation. The analysis of documents into their component parts is to a great extent independent of the treatment of the results in the light of Hebrew history, and Robertson Smith has observed that considerable progress had been made in the work of analysis before anything important was settled on the question of the laws²: "The strength of the present position of Pentateuch criticism is in good measure due to the fact that two lines of inquiry have converged to a common result." The historical criticism which brought the Priestly Code from the commencement of Israelite history and placed it at the end, although fundamentally changing the perspective, stood the independent test of the literary analysis. This agreement between the results of historical and literary criticism is typical, and it is impossible to resist the conviction that whatever advance may be made in the following thirty years³, the initial work of literary analysis and the recognition of the relative position of the legal codes will remain unchanged. "No science is ever complete, and biblical

¹ Cp. also E. Bischoff, *Babylonisch-Astrales im Weltbilde des Thalmud u. Midrasch*.

² *Old Testament in Jewish Church* (2nd ed.), p. 390, and especially p. 392.

³ Wellhausen's *Prolegomena* was published in 1878.

science is no exception to the rule¹." Each generation tests the labours of its predecessors with more perfect tools, and whatever be the precise form which the next advance may take—and it is impossible to ignore the signs of movement abroad—it is not difficult to foresee that it will be due to the first two aspects of biblical study (above), aided, one may hope, by a greater strictness in the historical method.

At the outset, the O. T. itself gives us the current views of past history in two forms: Genesis—Kings, Chronicles—Ezra—Nehemiah, and it is obvious that an historical change necessitated the different handling of Judæan history which appears in Chronicles. It is from the study of internal evidence that the first great work (Genesis—Kings) reveals previous stages of development, and one result of criticism has been to agree with other aspects of biblical research in proving the subjective character of the records. It is seen that the recensions preserve accepted or canonical views of the past which may or may not be correct, and it is evident that the historian has not a number of distinct documents at his command, but a written history (if not histories within histories) prepared for definite purposes. Further, when it is recognized that our records are due to Deuteronomic and Priestly recensions of older sources, the relative position which the older sources now hold is not necessarily that which they held in their original fuller form. It does not necessarily follow, in fact, that the successive recovery of older traditions will give a consecutive thread representing an older view of the history.

The traditional history of Israel looks back upon a great invasion of united tribes, a common movement ending with a successful occupation of the land, and one must admit that in itself the outline is entirely plausible and is supported by historical analogy. Indeed, in several respects it is (viewed superficially) more intelligible than the critical theory of a gradual settlement, an intermingling with earlier inhabitants, an almost absolute absorption and a recrudescence of national religious spirit. Is there no *tertium quid*? In due course a monarchy was instituted which, however, was soon followed by the partition of the tribes—the separation of Israel from Judah. The former fell about two centuries later, the latter survived until its great catastrophe in the first quarter of the sixth century. But Judah succeeded in effecting a reconstruction, and ultimately, under the influence of a new spirit, founded Judaism and made a complete breach with Samaria. Thus, at a time when the traditions were taking their present form, the crucial centuries for the growth of Judaism could be divided into three periods: (a) the age of the

¹ H. P. Smith, *Old Testament History*, p. viii.

rivals Judah and Israel, (*b*) the survival of Judah, its fall and re-organization, and finally (*c*) the steps leading up to the Samaritan schism. For historical criticism (the investigation of the traditions preserved in Deuteronomic and priestly recensions) it is ultimately necessary to consider the evidence in the light of the history of *b* and *c*; to work back from the recensions to the incorporated sources rather than to work forward. And here one is at once struck by two features—the claim of Judah to represent the true Israel, and the obscurity which hangs over the history of the second and third periods.

The greatest care has been taken to elucidate the former feature, and the importance attached to it is evident from the space given to the earliest period when Judah was reckoned along with other tribes among the sons of the ancestor Israel—Jacob. The explanation is perfectly natural and is part of the scheme which runs throughout. It is quite in agreement with it that the history of the northern kingdom ceases with the fall of Samaria. But no one who has read himself into biblical history will suppose that the history of the land north of Judah ceased towards the close of the eighth century, and one is compelled to allow that there is a certain artificiality in the sources, which are now of Judæan origin. One is bound to admit that the compiler of Kings is in accord with the prevailing traditional outline, and whilst one is able to understand the plan to which he gives effect, one cannot ignore the necessity of attempting to gauge life and conditions in the northern kingdom after its fall. But this unity of design, intelligible when one considers the Judæan standpoint, has already been weakened in other places. Nobody can patiently examine the evidence which has been brought to bear upon the traditions of the invasion and the conquest without the conviction that the traditional view is beset with the most serious internal difficulties, whether as regards the actual narratives which have been employed for the purpose, or in the course of subsequent history (*viz.* the Judges). Many scholars have been compelled to reject the invasion of a united Israel as described in the book of Joshua; a number are inclined to attribute the growth of Judah to a separate movement, and some have even questioned whether relations between Judah and Israel began before the days of David. Apart from the arguments of individual writers, the tendency of past historical criticism is sufficiently drastic, since the explanation of the incorporation of Judah under Israel, and the claim of the former to the latter title, demands an adequate historical background which is gradually being destroyed.

Next, when one descends to the closing historical traditions, it is

certain that the period which ended with the Samaritan schism had not been one of unceasing hostility. The records are provokingly silent upon the previous relations, and those which have survived feel the smart of more recent events. The general trend of recent criticism of Ezra—Nehemiah has at least shown that there is some insecurity in the chronicler's history, and when this is taken into consideration with the chronological gaps in the present books, the blanks in the crucial periods of biblical history become the more remarkable¹. These are blanks which future research will endeavour to fill, and if indirect evidence points to close relations between the people of the north and of the south, the attention which the writers pay to the early ages before the days of the rival kingdoms will become more striking².

The unity of design underlying the biblical history is such that fatal flaws in any part of it affect the whole, and it appears to be an inexact method to attempt to apply the conclusions gained from an investigation of one period to the traditional representation of another. Because a land or people has had a history it does not follow that it took the precise course described in its national

¹ These emphasize more vividly the difference between the chronicler's history, and the earlier. The chronicler had access to several sources which are lost, but he passes over events of the sixth century preserved in Kings and in Jeremiah. And the significant feature is that the history of Kings, at all events, is incomplete (cp. also Holzhey, *Buch d. Könige*, Munich, 1899, p. 48 sq.).

² In attempting to realize the position of popular religion in Samaria, one will naturally ask whether the influence of a Hosea would not survive the fall, and one will note that literary criticism has recognized a late Ephraimite or Elohist strand approximating the Deuteronomic standpoint. Further evidence might be found in the independent history of the northern kingdom with its prophetic narratives. It is at least certain that some kind of Yahweh worship continued, but it would be precarious to estimate its value entirely from the denunciations of advanced prophets. In Judah the best as well as the worst of the population suffered in the exile, but the general religious condition can be partially estimated by regarding the type of man like Micah whom the peasantry could produce, and by the literary evidence for the exilic revision of earlier prophecies. In both north and south the fall of the monarchy must have given an impetus to the non-official and popular cults, and, if national history went for anything, the reversion to non-monarchical life may be expected to have led to closer relations. But when we come to search the subsequent historical traditions our source is the chronicler's work, and in his time the Samaritan schism was a comparatively recent event.

records, and it is only necessary to observe native sources elsewhere to realize the scrutiny to which the scanty biblical traditions should be subjected from every point of view. The one great problem of the O. T. from the historical standpoint is Judah=Israel, and there are two features in particular which seem to be of the first importance in handling it. The first is the fact that the traditions in their final form are due to Judaeon recensions; the second is the evidence for an independent national history of Israel (as opposed to Judah). It is clear that the Judaeon compiler of the book of Kings has taken over an Israelite source, and fragments of similar origin can in all probability be found in the books of Samuel¹. Were there not kings before Jeroboam I, from the (north) Israelite point of view? But whilst one naturally recognizes two independent histories where the history of the divided monarchy is concerned, the fragments in the preceding books are apt to be rejected or obscured because of their failure to agree with other narratives which belong to the predominating—the Judaeon—view. To the present writer, at all events, it seems extremely probable that other traces of the specific northern standpoint can be found in Joshua and Judges, particularly in passages which the modern reconstructions are obliged to reject²; and when one considers the extent to which some of the traditions in biblical history diverge, it would seem that the endeavour to adhere as closely as possible to the prevailing traditional outline, by rejecting discordant details, misunderstands the nature of the sources and does not make sufficient allowance for radical variations in the representation of the history as also of the religion of the past.

¹ Not only can one find similar annalistic matter for both Judah and Israel (*J. Q. R.*, XIX, pp. 372, 374, 379 sq., 383 n. 1), but there appears to be a more than superficial resemblance between the literary treatment of Israelite history from Ahab to Jehu (the relative amount of space given to these few years is striking), and that for the first king of Israel and his rise. Needless to say, if it is correct to recover the annalistic thread for both kingdoms in both Samuel and Kings, the result is suggestive for literary criticism; at present the origin of the literary structure of the concluding chapters of Samuel and the opening of 1 Kings is extremely obscure (*J. Q. R.*, XIX, p. 380 n. 1).

² Necessarily, when one takes as an example the difficulties in the statements regarding the early fortunes of Jerusalem, which, it is now generally held, did not become "Israelite" until David's time (but see *J. Q. R.*, XIX, p. 392 n. 1). According to the new suggestion, on the other hand, the O. T. has preserved details regarding the history of Jerusalem from two absolutely distinct standpoints—the (north) Israelite and the Judaeon.

In conclusion, it would be a great mistake to suppose with Dr. Orr that the recent movement abroad proves the insecurity of the critical *position*. The traditional history has been proved to stand in need of a reconstruction, and attempts have been made to build up, from the older traditions, an edifice which is regarded as the early history of Israel. If it is impossible to resist the conviction that none has yet been found which does sufficient justice to the evidence viewed in every aspect, the fault lies with the building and not with the foundations, and those to whom Dr. Orr might point as proof of the insecurity of *critical reconstructions of Israelite history* differ vitally from him in admitting the claims of literary criticism. But the opinion may be ventured that the writers in question have allowed themselves to be swayed too much by the archaeological evidence, which, however illuminating, stands upon quite another footing as compared with the native written records. The precautions that are necessary when very diverse material is being examined, will be realized when one perceives the mistakes which could be made if a future age had to investigate the early history of this country from a composite work made up from historical writings extending over two or three centuries (say to the time of Geoffrey of Monmouth), and from archaeological and external evidence. It is obvious that in the case of the Israelites the native material must be the starting-point, and the literary-critical view of its structure accounts at once for the apparent unity; and it not only shows that the internal problems of one period cannot ultimately be disassociated from the whole, but it also explains why all should prove to be an equally serious character. Here and elsewhere¹ the effort has been made to show that there are problems apart from those of the Exodus, Invasion, and Conquest which are of very real significance for conceptions of Israelite history, and if the arguments have any weight, so far from partial reconstructions being adequate, the choice will lie between the traditional history itself, and such new perspective as shall follow from a more comprehensive study of the entire historical area.

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¹ In the "Introduction" to the separate publication of *Critical Notes on Old Testament History*.